which they may apply for permanent skilled migration . When applying for permanent skilled migration, they will need to demonstrate a higher level of English proficiency than that required earlier.

(b) No.

(c) and (d) Do not arise,

Plight of Indian workers abroad

22. SHRI MAHENDRA MOHAN : Will the Minister of OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that thousands of Indian and other immigrant workers had protested against their employers for low wages, forced labour and torture by their employers;

(b) whether many of them were arrested and put on wrongful confinement and were not provided any-legal aid;

(c) whether our embassy in Dubai talked to the concerned authorities about the plight of Indian workers; and

(d) if not, the reasons thereof?

THE MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS (SHRI VAYALAR RAVI): (a) Yes, Sir. About 4300 workers of Pauling Middle East Company on 28.10.07 and about 35000 workers of Arabtec Construction Company in UAE had gone on strike from 1.11.07 demanding increase in salary etc.

(b) to (d) In case of M/s Pauling Middle East Company out of 4300 workers detained by police authorities 4141 workers have been released and rejoined work. There were about 90 Indians detained for investigation for violence out of which 87 were sent back to India. 3 Indians are still under detention and are awaiting the final decision of UAE authorities. Consulate officials are in touch with UAE authorities for their release and return to India. In the case of M/s Arabtec Construction Company, most of the workers resumed work after the company announced an increase in salary on 10.11.07. Around 500 workers from various nationalities who tried to stop others from going to work were arrested. The Consulate officials are providing all possible assistance to these workers.

Indians working in Dubai

23. SHRI SHANTARAM LAXMAN NAIK: Will the Minister of OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a number of Indians working in Dubai were arrested by the Dubai Authorities;

(b) whether Government had approached the Dubai authorities in this regard;

(c) the stand taken by Government in this regard;

(d) the response of the Dubai authorities; and

(e) the details of the decisions taken by the Dubai authorities regarding the arrested Indians?

THE MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS (SHRI VAYALAR RAVI): (a) Yes, Sir. Initially, around 4300 workers of M/s Pauling Middle East Company, Dubai, who had gone on protest against the company demanding higher salary etc., of whom a large number were

Indians, had been detained. After the intervention of the Indian Embassy, 4141 workers were released. Only, 159 workers, who had actually participated in the violence were detained, out of them 90 were Indians.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Embassy of India and Consulate General of India remain in close touch with workers and raise with local authorities the problems faced by Indian workers.

(d) Government of UAE directed the Ministry of Labour to analyse the situation and come up with proposals to find solutions to the issues raised by the workers. They also warned companies violating the legal right of workers and said that if found guilty they could be penalized.

(e) The Dubai authorities decided to deport all workers who indulged in violence. Police authorities informed that 90 out of the 159 persons involved in the violence were Indians. Eighty seven of them have since been sent back to India.

Nyaya Panchayat Bill

24. SHRI SHANTARAM LAXMAN NAIK: Will the Minister of PANCHAYATI RAJ be pleased to state:

(a) whether the proposed Bill on the Nyaya Panchayats is ready;

(b) whether the State Governments have been consulted in the matter;

(c) the details of their reaction thereon; and

(d) whether the Bill is proposed to be introduced in the ensuing winter Session?

THE MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) to (c) The first Draft Bill, prepared by the Drafting Committee on the Nyaya Panchayats Bill, was forwarded to State Governments and Central Ministries concerned for their comments. Comments have been received from 22 Central Ministries/Departments and 17 States/Union Territories. The gist of responses received from the States/Union Territories is given in the enclosed Statement. (*See* below). Based on the comments received from different quarters, the draft Bill has been recast. Further process of consultation with the State Governments and the Union Ministry of Law and Justice is on.

(d) No Sir. The Bill is not proposed to be introduced in the current Winter Session of Parliament.

Statement

The gist of comments of the State Governments/Union Territory Administration on Draft Nyaya Panchayats Bill

Sl. No.	Name of the State/UT	Comments
1	2	3
1.	The Andaman and Nicobar Islands	The Andaman and Nicobar Islands (Panchayats) Regulation, 1994 has a separate Chapter for Nyaya Panchayats. No specific comments have been given on the Draft Nyaya Panchayats Bill.